5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

411 enough to be of much service. I have been told also that [824] sometimes they used hazle wood for bows.

Arrows were made of shoots of the sarvis berry wood, [413] which was straight, very heavy, and not brittle. They were smoothed and straightened by a stone implement. The [237] grooves were made by pushing the shafts through a rib or other flat bone in which had been made a hole, circular except for one or two projections on the inside. These projections worked out the groove. The object of these grooves is said to have been to allow the blood to flow [422] freely. Each man marked his arrows by painting them, or by some special combination of colored feathers. The arrow heads were of two kinds, — barbed slender points for [412] war, and barbless for hunting. Knives were originally made of stone, as were also war clubs, mauls, and some of the scrapers for fleshing and graining hides. Some of the flint knives were long, others short. A stick was fitted to them, [237] forming a wooden handle. The handles of mauls and war clubs were usually made of green sticks fitted as closely as possible into a groove made in the stone, the whole being bound together by a covering of hide put on green, tightly fitted and strongly sewed. This, as it shrunk in drying, bound the different parts of the implement together in the strongest possible manner. Short, heavy spears were used, the points being of stone or bone, barbed.

• 372 I have heard no explanation among the Blackfeet of the origin of fire. In ancient times, it was obtained by means of fire sticks, as described elsewhere. The starting of the spark [177] with these sticks is said to have been hard work. At almost their first meeting with the whites, they obtained flints and steels, and learned how to use them.

In ancient times, — in the days of fire sticks and even later, within the memory of men now living, — fire used to be [237] carried from place to place in a "fire horn." This was a buffalo horn slung by a string over the shoulder like a pow-

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

der horn. The horn was lined with moist, rotten wood, and the open end had a wooden stopper or plug fitted to it. On leaving camp in the morning, the man who carried the horn took from the fire a small live coal and put it in the horn, and on this coal placed a piece of punk, and then plugged up the horn with the stopper. The punk smouldered in this almost air-tight chamber, and, in the course of two or three hours, the man looked at it, and if it was nearly consumed, put another piece of punk in the horn. The first young men who reached the appointed camping ground would gather two or three large piles of wood in different places, and as soon as some one who carried a fire horn reached camp, he turned out his spark at one of these piles of wood, and a little blowing and nursing gave a blaze which started the fire. The other fires were kindled from this first one, and when the women reached camp and had put the lodges up, they went to these fires, and got coals with which to start those in their lodges. This custom of borrowing coals persisted up to the last days of the buffalo, and indeed may even be noticed still.

The punk here mentioned is a fungus, which grows on the birch tree. The Indians used to gather this in large quantities and dry it. It was very abundant at the Touchwood Hills (whence the name) on Beaver Creek, a tributary of the Saskatchewan from the south.

The Blackfeet made buckets, cups, basins, and dishes from the lining of the buffalo's paunch. This was torn off in large pieces, and was stretched over a flattened willow or cherry hoop at the bottom and top. These hoops were sometimes inside and sometimes outside the bucket or dish. In the latter case, the hoop at the bottom was often sewed to the paunch, which came down over it, double on the outside, the needle holes being pitched with gum or tallow. The hoop at the upper edge was also sewed to the paunch, and a rawhide bail passed under it, to carry it by.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

ners for a boy's sled. Pieces of ribbone were fashioned into gambling dice. Wedge-shaped pieces of the porous hipbone or shoulder blade made useful paint brushes. A buffalo skull was placed on the altar in the tribal sun dance. Some women dehaired rawhide rope by pulling the rope back and forth through the eye sockets of a buffalo skull.

Many buffalo cows killed in early spring contained the almost fully developed embryos of calves. Indian women cut off the heads of these unborn calves and used the entire body skin for berry, pemmican, and tobacco sacks. Finally, dried buffalo dung provided a practical substitute for firewood when Indians were camped on the open plains at a distance from firewood.

Most of these articles were by-products of the buffalo chase. Blackfoot Indians hunted buffalo for food and hides. The great number of animals killed provided ample supplies of the materials required to make the many other items listed above. Although buffalo were hunted throughout the year, the Indians recognized seasonal differences in the quality of the meat and the utility of the hides. Throughout most of the year the meat of bulls was tough and unpalatable compared with that of cows. So the Blackfeet preferred to kill cows for food except during the early summer months when bulls were prime. They recognized the approach of the bull-hunting season when they saw the yellow flowers of "tooth grass." During the warm summer months, when buffalo hair was short, skins were taken for tipi covers and the numerous other articles made from soft-dressed skins or rawhide. Cows were at their best in the fall. This was the period of intensive hunting to secure winter meat supplies. It was only during the cold months, from November through February, that buffalo hair was long. That was the season for killing buffalo to obtain robes for the American traders and for Indian use in making bedding and winter clothing. Calves, generally born in May, were hunted soon thereafter.

Although their pedestrian ancestors surrounded buffalo on the open plains in the warmer months, Blackfoot horsemen rarely employed the mounted surround. They preferred the chase, a

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

side pockets of buffalo-hide saddlebags. Kettles were put into skin sacks and tied on top of the pack horses' loads. Tools and utensils were placed in rectangular rawhide cases, which usually were carried on the horse travois. Ceremonial equipment was carried in bundles on the travois or in fringed rawhide containers over the horns of the favorite wife's saddle.

Scouts rode well in advance of the moving caravan, on constant lookout for signs of game or enemies. The other active warriors rode on the flanks and in the rear of the moving camp, carrying their weapons. The medicine pipe owner and the chief or chiefs and their families led the main body. Other camp members fell in behind the chiefs in family groups with their travois, pack animals, riding horses, and loose horses. Older boys drove the loose horses. Babies rode on their mothers' backs in the folds of their mothers' buffalo robes. Toddlers often rode on the travois. When they tired of riding, they got off and ran for a while. Older children usually rode horseback, sometimes two or three of them on a horse.

At noon the chief halted the caravan for a short rest and lunch. This was a cold meal of prepared meat, pemmican, or dried plant foods, and water. Usually the day's march ended in the middle or late afternoon so there was ample time for the women to erect the lodges, unpack the horses, and prepare the evening meal before dark. The chief chose the campsite and selected the spot for his lodge. Only during tribal movements in summer was the camp circle formed. At the end of a day's march by a separate hunting band the families pitched their lodges around that of their chief in an uneven cluster. They did not scatter widely because of the danger of enemy attack.

Usually the Indians knew in advance if their night camp was to be made without wood or water. If wood was lacking, dried buffalo chips were collected. Dried grass was used for tinder. The grass was ignited by sparks made by striking a curved fire-steel against a piece of flint. Water was brought along in buffalo paunches to supply a dry camp. Horses and dogs were watered in basin-shaped troughs of rawhide. There was little difficulty in

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

long poles connected by rawhide lines converged upon the medicine lodge from the four cardinal directions. They sang as they advanced. Then, using their poles as props, they carefully raised the center pole into position so that it stood upright in the hole dug to receive it. The medicine women stood by, praying that this pole raising might be accomplished successfully. Should the pole fail to stand upright, people would surely accuse her of being less virtuous than she proclaimed to be.

Raising the center pole provided the dramatic climax to the medicine woman's role in the sun dance. Once this pole was firmly planted, her assistants led her to her lodge, where she broke her fast on berry soup. Her husband took a final sweat bath to purify himself. Meanwhile, the other men of the great encampment completed the medicine lodge as quickly as possible by binding the rafters with the prepared hide thongs and covering the sides of the lodge with green cottonwood boughs.

Early the next morning a booth of cottonwood boughs was erected on the west side of the medicine lodge. This booth was occupied by two or more men who periodically left it to dance to the accompaniment of several old men who sang and beat upon a buffalo rawhide with rattles. Wearing only breechclouts and moccasins, the dancers faced the sun and blew upon eagle-bone whistles. Their dance consisted primarily of raising and lowering themselves on their toes in time to the music. These dancers were spoken of as "weather dancers" because they were responsible for preventing rain and insuring sunny weather through the remaining days of the ceremony. They usually performed for four days, during which they refrained from eating. At intervals during this period persons approached the weather dancers to be painted and prayed for.

On the first of the four days a fire pit was dug between the center pole and the entrance to the medicine lodge on its east side. Then, one by one, victorious warriors entered the medicine lodge, hung offerings to the sun on the center pole, and recounted their war exploits. After reciting each brave deed, a warrior placed a stick on the fire. Those who could add enough sticks

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

to make the fire blaze high were greatly admired for their prowess. The warriors dramatized their accounts by re-enacting their accomplishments—the killing of an enemy, the capture of a weapon or a horse, or the taking of a scalp. They achieved considerable realism in these performances by such acts as firing their guns in the air and riding around the lodge with stick horses between their legs.

However, by far the most dramatic of all the warriors' actions in the medicine lodge were the excruciating self-tortures undergone by young men who had made vows to torture themselves in the sun dance of their tribe. In 1947 the Blood Indian Heavy Head, one of the last of the Blackfeet to submit to this painful ordeal, described his experience to me.

« « « My partner, Buffalo Teeth, and I went to war to take horses. At Medicine Hat we found a small camp of Cree half-bloods. It was moonlight when we sighted their camp. I looked up at the moon and prayed to it, "If I have good luck and get home safely I shall be tortured at the sun dance." Then I stole into the camp and got one bay that was picketed in front of a lodge without any of the enemy waking. Buffalo Teeth got a roan.

When I reached home, I told my story to my father, Water Bull. The old man got up and sang his encouraging song. Then he told me, "My son, you have done something worth doing. You have made a vow that you will be tortured at the sun dance. You must do it this coming sun dance."

A short time after that the bands began to come together for the summer encampment. I filled my pipe and went to Little Bear, a relative of mine who had been through the torture years before. I gave him the pipe and a buckskin horse, and said, "Here is a horse for you. Keep this pipe too. I want you to look after me in the torture." Little Bear went to the next lodge and got two old men, Green Grass Bull and Red Bead, both of whom had been through the torture. They came to Little Bear's lodge, smoked my pipe, and prayed for me.

The day before the torture I ate and drank nothing. Next day I had nothing until after the torture. However, the three old men gave me some sagebrush to chew.

I was the last and the youngest of the three Blood Indians to

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

stable-bred, grain-fed horses could not endure the rigors of Alberta winters as well as could western-bred, range horses (ibid., pp. 132–133).[17]

SUPPLEMENTAL WINTER HORSE FOOD

Blackfoot belief that "a horse will starve to death if it doesn't get food for four days" sharpened their watch over their horses in periods of intense cold and heavy snows. If the snow was too deep to permit rustling, the people tried to clear away an area from which they could collect grass for the horses. However, the most common supplemental feed was the inner bark of the round-leafed cottonwood. This tree was common in the valley of the Marias as well as in other river valleys in the Blackfoot Country at some distance east of the Rockies. Some owners made a practice of feeding this bark to their best mounts (buffalo runners and race horses) in winter. Others employed cottonwood bark as an emergency ration to be relied on only when grass was insufficient or unobtainable by rustling horses. Some horses "chewed like beavers" on cottonwood branches without waiting for their owners to cut them. Generally women cut cottonwood trees and limbs into sections 2 or 3 feet long, or peeled off irregular strips of the bark and gave them to the horses. For use as horse feed quantities of this bark were carried by pack horses accompanying small winter hunting parties. Older informants spoke of cottonwood bark as "better than oats." Children, too, liked to chew the bark for its sweet taste. Logs of cottonwood, from which the bark had been stripped during the winter, made a soft, easily chopped firewood for camp use the following fall.

Short Face claimed the Piegan discovered the value of cottonwood bark as winter horse feed by accident. He cited a tradition to the effect that "one winter a bridled horse was lost. Its owner, believing it had found nothing to eat, feared the horse was dead. He found it several days later with its reins caught around the trunk of a cottonwood. The horse had thrived by eating the bark of that tree. After the owner observed this he decided to feed cottonwood bark to all his horses. Soon all the Piegan who owned horses began to cut cottonwood and offer the bark to their horses." We know, however, that the practice of feeding this bark to horses in winter was both old and widespread among the Plains Indians.[18]

[17] The earliest reference to Plains Indian horses rustling for their winter food by pawing away the snow occurs in Henry's observations among the Assiniboin in February, 1776 (Henry, 1809, p. 289).

[18] Hendry (1907, p. 345) noted that the horses of his Cree and Assiniboin companions were "feeding on willow tops" in the winter of 1755. Lewis and Clark observed that the Mandan fed cottonwood bark to their horses in the winter of 1804–5 (Coues, 1893, vol. 1, pp. 232–233). This practice was common among the Arikara (Bradbury, 1817, p. 165) and Pawnee (Dunbar, 1880, p. 332). Capt. W. P. Clark wrote of the winter feeding of cottonwood bark to horses as a common practice among the tribes of the northern Plains (Clark, 1885, p. 307). In 1852, Capt. Marcy observed that the old winter camp sites of the Kiowa and Comanche on the Red River and its tributaries were thickly strewn with cottonwoods the bark of which had been fed to their horses (Marcy, 1937, pp. 60–61, 141–142, 168).

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

day's camp, and availability of wood, water, and wild grass. When the chief reached this locality he selected a spot for his lodge or lodges. His women folk began unpacking and setting up his lodge.[97] Other families pitched their lodges around his, being careful not to scatter too widely because of the danger of attack. Lodges in a band camp were not aligned in a circle, but were placed within a distance of about 10 to 12 feet of one another in an otherwise unplanned cluster.

The medicine pipe man placed his bundle on its tripod behind his lodge. The men smoked and conversed as the women unpacked, set up the lodges and prepared the evening meal. Boys who cared for the horses were given their instructions by family heads. If there were signs of the enemy a horse corral was built for their protection at night. Generally the day's march ended in the middle or late afternoon so that there was ample time before dark to erect the lodges and make preparations for the night.

MAKING CAMP WITHOUT WOOD OR WATER

Sometimes it was known in advance that night camp would have to be made without wood or water. If no wood was available dried buffalo chips were substituted for firewood. Buck brush or dried grass were employed to start the chips burning.

If a dry camp was anticipated water was carried along in buffalo paunches, about the necks of which willow sticks were woven to keep the vessels round. Each vessel was closed at the top by tie strings or by a fitted rawhide cover. These vessels were transported tied to the outer ends of travois platforms where the primary struts crossed the shafts (fig. 26, *b*). Each family carried four or more paunches, depending upon its size and the number of dogs and horses owned.[98] Horses and dogs were watered by pouring the liquid into basin-shaped troughs of rawhide. In the spring of the year large ponds of water, formed from melting snows, appeared in depressions in the Blackfoot country, affording a ready supply of water in localities normally dry through the summer and fall months. Little difficulty was experienced in obtaining water in spring.

---

[97] Larocque's (1910, p. 61) description of Crow movements states that the principal chief "pitches his tent the first, all the others encamp about him." Frank Bosin said this was also Kiowa practice.

[98] Use of buffalo-paunch containers for carrying water on the march was common among the Plains Indians. In 1820, the Kiowa Apache were seen carrying water in buffalo paunches of 6 to 8 gallons capacity, closed at the tops by sticks passed through their margins. In camp the paunches were suspended from tripods of light poles (James, 1823, vol. 2, pp. 103, 108). The Hidatsa carried water for dogs in wood-skewered buffalo paunches, on dog travois (Wilson, 1924, p. 225, fig. 58). A Kiowa buffalo-paunch water vessel is on exhibition in the Southern Plains Indian Museum, Anadarko, Okla. Specimens from the Gros Ventres and Mandan are on exhibition in the American Museum of Natural History, New York City. A drawing by a Southern Cheyenne artist, showing a paunch vessel tied to a travois for transport in the manner employed by the Blackfoot is reproduced on plate 6, *b*. This drawing (U. S. N. M. No. 166,082) was collected by H. R. Voth in 1889.

131 Christian policy of the Government." (Annual Report Comm. Indian
175 Affairs, 1874, p. 260). Agent Hay took no steps to comply with
648 the Executive Order and he was removed from his office.
657

His successor, John S. Wood entered on duty January 24, 1875. On February 15, he wrote the Commissioner: "The Indians would be satisfied if the South Bank of the Teton was made the line of the reservation." (Wood to Comm. Ind. Affairs, Feb. 15, 1875. Indian Office Records, The National Archives).

131 In the National Archives, Indian Office Records, there is
175 a report from Andrew Dusold, Detective for the Blackfeet Agency to
311 Agent Wood dated February 12, 1875, explaining the importance of
221 the area between the Teton and Birch Creek to the Indians. The Indians had used and in fact were at that time using the valley of the Teton for winter camps. He stated, "Piegans and Blackfeet are camped on this stream in different camps for a distance of 55 miles
● [372] from the Agency." The Teton offered the Indians an abundance of firewood, whereas none of the smaller streams between the Teton and Birch Creek afforded sufficient firewood for their winter camps. He pointed out that very few Indians encamped on the forks of the Marias in winter, but camped on the Teton and the main Marias where the buffalo ranged; that most of the timber along the Marias was on the south side of the river, which would be outside the boundaries

575 824 778 we have found fir needles in the initiation bundles of the Horn Society. We were told that the needles were mixed with the dry paint to make it smell better. Fir needles also were chewed and then sprayed over the Horn [783] ceremonial containers to purify them.

[783] Fir needles were used as incense during the transfer ceremonies of the Black Spring tipi design and the Bear Medicine Hat bundle.

PUFFBALLS

Lycoperdon spp.

824 The prairie puffball (a fungus) figured in Blackfoot religious life. The Blackfoot name for it is ka-ka-toos ("less powerful"), which implies that puffballs are stars fallen to earth during supernatural events.

[776] There is a story about the woman who married Morning Star and had a child by this supernatural being. When she returned to earth with the Natoas bundles and her child she was directed by the star-personage to keep her baby from touching the ground for fourteen days. She managed all right until the day she went for wood and left the child in the care of a grandmother. The grandmother was careless, and the baby touched the ground. It turned into a large puffball and returned to the heavens as the Fixed Star (North Star), plugging the hole left by the woman when she pulled out the Holy Turnip.

[782] [775] [372] [342] [532] Lycoperdon and other fungus, Polyporus, were used as incense to keep ghosts away. They were also included in the Firelighters bundle of the Horn Society for use as a kind of punk to light a fire easily. On certain painted lodges (for example the Otter lodge, shown in Fig. 20), the small circles at the base of the tipi represented the puffball (not lakes as is commonly thought), which insured fire to those within.

000 LUPINES

Lupinus spp.

18: Wissler E-5 (1903-1912) 1913
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Our chief specific information was obtained from two informants whose narrative we give in substance. 561 575

According to Red-plume the bull society originated in a dream:— [173]

A man once dreamed that he was invited to a ceremony. He felt that the persons dancing there were transformed buffalo bulls. One of them said to him, "We invited you here to show how to do this ceremony. We shall give (transfer) it to you." So the dreamer watched and noted all. Then he went home. A long time after this dream he called the people together and told them the story. He asked them to help him start the society. They agreed and so the bull society began.

The leader of the society wore a straight-up bonnet with a tail also bearing feathers. The latter are spoken of as "boss ribs."[1] This seems to be the same general type as used by the horn society. 561 575

Two members were known as the scabby bulls. They wore headdresses made from the horns and hairy skin of the buffalo; also robes with the hairy side out. Their position in the dance was at the end of the line, or something like the bears in the brave society. 796 [292]

There were two young unmarried men members. They wore caps of otterskin with a few erect eagle tail-feathers behind and before. [237]

The lay members seem to have been of two classes; those wearing straight-up bonnets and those wearing horn bonnets.

In the dance they formed two abreast, the leader at the head and the scabby bulls at the rear. The two young members occupied outlying positions on the flanks. They sat in this position in the open before they danced. The four drummers were stationed some distance in the rear. Their first formation was always some distance outside of the camp circle. After they had lined up, they waited until a horseman performed a curious ceremony.[2] As he set out he carried some robes and other valuable property. He acted as if the bull society were real buffalo, being careful to keep away from the wind until he had the line between him and the camp. Then he dismounted and kindled a fire with buffalo chips. All this time the men in line were on their knees making dancing motions with their bodies, accompanied by the drummers and singers. As soon as the smoke rose, the men in the line turned to look at it. The rider mounted, shouted, and rode toward them. At this, the bulls started forward on a trot, while the musicians followed, singing and drumming. The horseman rode along on the flank. When he shouted, all stopped and looked at him. Then he threw down one of the presents he carried and shouted as before. At this the line started on again. This was done four times. 561 575 796 535 [372]

Then the rider drove them to a watering place. As the dancers neared the water, he dismounted and standing to one side of the line took up four stones. Then he counted four war deeds and gave a horse to some one (not a member). Then he threw a stone into the water at which the bulls ran back. The bulls again approached and were again frightened. At the fifth attempt, they drank.

After this they proceeded to the camp circle where they formed in a circle and danced like the other societies.

---

[1] Vol. 7, 114.

[2] Curtis, Vol. 6, 28, says this was a young man. Our informant says he must be a very distinguished man and wealthy and not likely to be young. [114]

18: Wissler E-5 (1903-1912) 1913
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

All the war-bonnets we now have came from the bulls and in transferring the same the songs of this society are sung. 561 575

The importance of this society may justify the full presentation of still another account by Big-brave:— [173]

When Big-brave's father was quite a young man he saw the bull society. The following is his account of it as told by Big-brave. 561

One morning the people moved their camp a short distance away, only the members of the bull society remaining behind. When the camp was pitched an old man called out, saying that someone must ride back and drive the bulls to the camps and to the water. One of the chief warriors taking some blankets with him rode back on a fine pinto horse to drive in the bulls. 575 796

The bulls all wore buffalo robes with the hair side out and painted with white earth in spots to represent mud. Many wore horn bonnets while some wore buffalo head wool bonnets which had small feathers fastened to them. One of the leaders 561 575 796 292 531 237 [532]

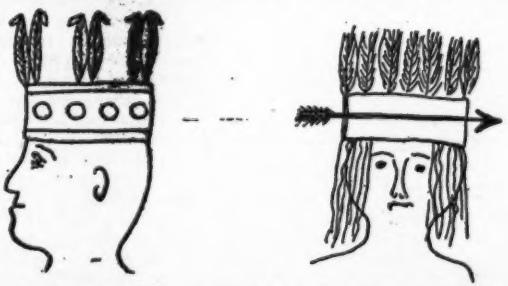

Fig. 17. Headdresses worn in the Bull Society. Drawn by Big-brave.

wore an otterskin cap with its edges decorated with bands of blue seed beads, while at four sides were quill-wrapped feathers decorated with bits of weasel tails at their tips. The width of the cap was two hands. Four pieces of some fungus growth which is found on trees in the north were attached to this cap. The other leader wore a straight-up war-bonnet similar to those made nowadays with weasel tail fringe and feathers, but with an arrow about the length of the forearm placed horizontally across the front. It is called "the bonnet which was struck with an arrow" and after the bull society was discontinued was used a great deal in war. [411]

Two of the members were known as the scabby bulls. They wore robes that were either poorly dressed or with the hair partly worn off to represent scabby bulls. They usually followed behind the others.

When the man riding the pinto horse approached the place where the bulls were, he made a fire a short distance from them on the leeward side. He started the fire with a flint and steel. As soon as the smoke reached the bulls, they all looked in the direction of the fire, the rider mounted his horse, shouted four times and the bulls rose shaking themselves and pretending to hook one another. Finally, they 561 575 796 535 [372]

574 in and relax and watch me go about my work. Of course, they
123 don't hesitate to point out my mistakes, which helps me to learn.

354 After we camped at that first Sun Dance with only an open fire in my tipi, I have come to appreciate having a wood-burning campstove besides. I set it up right next to the fireplace, on the side toward the doorway. I put up a high enough chimney to keep the smoke higher than the eyes of a standing person. Usually we put wire around the chimney and tie the ends to two opposing tipi poles, to keep it from falling down.

354 The worst thing about the open fire was the smoke that
372 turned many of my cooking sessions into tearful agonies, Also, the open fires limited the kinds of meals I could cook, and eagerly burned any meals I didn't cook just right. Finally, the open fires sent sparks flying around the tipi to burn our bedding and endanger the occupants, whenever I used the wrong wood. I thought at first that much of my open fire trouble was due to the wrong wood (pine being worst and cottonwood best), but I found that even a slight change in the wind direction outside kept the smoke from going up properly. Often it congregated right at about my work level. Getting and keeping enough dry wood on hand was still another problem, since wet wood on an open fire is a real disaster.

342 In some ways my camp is not much different from my
352 great-grandmother's, when my mother stayed with her. I use
353 similar bedding, tripods, and backrests, and a trunk for clothing and dance outfits. I have a fireplace and an altar for making incense for the medicine bundles. Best of all, I have a tipi that gives each camping experience that ageless good spirit of my ancestors.

352 But I also set up a table inside my tipi to cook on. I wasn't
[516] raised on the ground like my grandmothers, so I find it hard to be comfortable while working that way for long. I bring a kerosene lamp for lighting, a cooler to hold drinking water, and a couple of chairs for those of our old people who have a hard time getting up and down.

20: Hungry Wolf I-4,5 (no date) 1980
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

Smoking a tanned hide can turn it to several shades of either brown or yellow. This depends on the kind of wood you use, as well as how long you smoke it. Generally the lighter shades and colors are used for clothing, because they leave the leather softest. Dark smoked hide is generally used for moccasins, because it is most waterproofed.

The frame for holding up a hide is made either by setting up some short poles in the shape of a tipi frame or by setting willows into the ground and tying them to each other in the form of arches, like a small sweat lodge. A fire is built inside the framework and allowed to burn well until there is a good bed of coals. Then the actual wood for smoking the hide is placed on the coals, before the hide is draped over the framework. It is stitched or tied together to make a pretty tight enclosure, with the smoking wood inside. Rotten woods of various kinds are best for this. The important thing is to have plenty of smoke, but no fire. Open flames quickly scorch a hide beyond use, so the process has to be watched carefully.

I once smoked a hide inside a woodshed during the wintertime. A fire was built in an old bucket, and the rotten wood (cottonwood, in this case) was piled on top of the remaining coals. The hide was sewn shut except for a round opening at one end. Pieces of canvas were used to fill in any gaps where the hide joined together. The hide was hung from the ceiling of the woodshed by a cord. A skirt of canvas around the bottom reached the floor and kept the hide above the smoking wood. It took about three or four hours to smoke the whole elk hide.

OTHER CRAFTWORK

SINEW AND TOOLS

My grandmothers often made all their sewing equipment by hand, even after they could buy the materials from traders and stores.

their way to Waterton and Banff National Parks or to the famous Calgary Stampede in Canada. Yet there are areas far enough away from the speeding traffic for the Belly Buttes to remain the isolated center of the Holy Spirit among the Blood People.

The Power of the Buttes is felt by all who go near them, even when there is no encampment in progress. One winter a desperate family searched an old Sun Dance campsite for firewood, which is scarce out on the prairie. This family discovered they were using the fallen log of the sacred Center Pole for fuel when they were awakened during a cold night by an unseen Power singing the holy Center Pole songs in a loud voice. Another time, an enterprising rancher from our reserve began to fence in the Buttes so that his cattle could graze there. But he was discouraged from building his fence when strange sensations overtook him; older relatives reminded him that Holy Spirits must not be disturbed without some sacrifice.

□

In 1972 the Sun Dance Encampment was located near the edge of the flat that overlooks the tree- and brush-lined Belly River bottoms. As the flat rises up from the river, the Belly Buttes rise up from the flat, farther to the east. It is in those Buttes that many men have gone to find their visions and Spirit helpers. Bears lived there not long ago. Today, eagles sometimes build their nests there, and mountain lions cross tracks with porcupines and coyotes. In some of the many caves and crevices are now the final resting places of those Old People who passed away after laws were made forbidding the traditional practice of placing bodies near to the Spirit World on top of scaffolds or in branches of trees.

It was still morning when we arrived at the campground with our outfit. Our spiritual grandparents, Mokakin and Ponah, pointed out a vacant spot next to their tipi where they thought we should camp. Mokakin, who was attending his

through the Teachings he gave to me and my family. Some of these Teachings are too sacred for me to pass on in writing, but many others can be shared. Wolf Old Man, or the Old Man, was one of four holy men whose Teachings most influenced my interpretation of our Old Ways. 123 115

□

Our first chance to relax in the new camp came just before dark. Everything inside the lodge was in order, and our young son Wolf Child was securely tucked into his bed. The long, hot day and the fresh air gave his mind a cushion that immediately carried him into the world of sleep. A few small sticks of burning cottonwood crackled inside the stone circle of our fireplace and gave a cheery warmth to the cooling evening air. SikskiAki took one of the burning sticks and held the glowing end to the bowl of my long-stemmed pipe while I puffed until its contents were lit. The sacred herb glowed brightly within the shiny stone bowl that I had recently made with old Uncle Atsitsina's guidance. I offered the mouthpiece of the pipe to the Spirits of our sacred Bundle, then to Sun and Earth. 000 276 [372] [782]

For some time we sat in silence and puffed on the polished mouthpiece, watching little clouds of smoke whirl upward around us, and toward the smokehole of our tipi. The sacred tobacco comes from our Mother Earth in the form of leaves and it goes to our Father, Sun, in the form of smoke. We watched it diffuse into the air. It seemed to disappear. Yet we knew that it was only changing into a shape invisible to our eyes, just like the Spirits that dwell all around us. 276 778

At the rear of our tipi, facing east through the doorway, is our altar. An altar is a small area of earth cleared of pebbles and grasses, a place where we burn incense. The shape of an altar is determined by the traditions of each household's sacred Bundles. Ours requires an altar in the shape of a rectangle. 778 353

during these midsummer nights this far north on the plains. 512

While I combed and braided my hair, SikskiAki lit a small fire of cottonwood twigs so that we could have a coal for our morning smudge of incense. With the forked stick, she picked up a piece of one of the twigs and placed it in the center of our altar. She sprinkled a few sweet pine needles on the coal, but sparingly, for the trees that give us this holy incense are usually found only in remote and scattered mountain places. A little spiral of smoke again marked the place where the hot coal and the dry pine needles met. The pungent odor brought the Good Spirits to us through our sense of smell. With our hands held in the smoke we again took the Spirit, brought it to us, and accepted it into our minds and bodies by rubbing ourselves from head to toe. We prayed: 788 512 [372] [824] [779] 782 512

HiYo Good Spirits who are here with us! You who make up everything that is Good and holy! Let us take your Holy Power and use it well. Let us be thankful for being aware of the goodness of your presence. . . . Let us think of your goodness as we go through this day, so that this day will be good for us. HiYo Natosi, our sacred Sun above! Help us to see the goodness along our paths. Let us be thankful for being able to see you again this day. Let us feel your warmth in our bodies, Natosi, and let us reflect your warmth in our food and in our homes, so that our families may be healthy. HiYo Earth, our holy Mother! Let us feel your strength beneath our feet as we walk upon you this day. Let us be strong and safe as long as we remain close to your body . . . all of you Good Spirits! Let us go through this day with respect and holy thoughts, and let us learn from our mistakes and trials, so that we may end this day with happiness. HiYo! Hear me!

□

After we finished praying, SikskiAki took our sacred Bundle outside and fastened it over our 778 512

doorway. In the Old Days, the Bundle would have been hung from its tripod and placed at the rear of our tipi, even though horses would sometimes knock over such tripods. Nowadays, few people hang their sacred Bundles on tripods, not for fear of horses, but for fear of mischievous children who are not taught an understanding and respect for our holy Ways. 778 512

Dipping water out of our tin cream cans to wash the sleep from our faces, we thought of the Old Days, when our People were forced to use cleaned-out buffalo paunches to store water. Such containers were usually tied to tipi poles or hung from smaller tripods. They were hard to handle and keep clean. Water from them had an odd taste. It is no wonder that our Old People treasured metal buckets and kettles brought to this country by the early traders. 415 512

I stepped outside and walked over to the rim of the coulee that ran past our side of the camp. Most everyone in camp made at least one trip to this coulee each day. Across the coulee, I could see horses tied to bushes, where their owners had left them to graze. Some of these horses were later to be given as payment in transfer ceremonies during the encampment. Most of the bushes were covered with ripe berries, and all day long women and children would go back and forth to fill their berry containers. 512 [222]

Although it was still early in the morning, Sun was already over the top of the Belly Buttes, on his way across the sky. It seemed as though only the Old People were awake so early in the morning. Some were just sitting, waiting to wake up fully in the fresh morning air. Others were quietly standing, facing Sun, praying in quiet voices. One old lady was walking along with the help of a cane, her eyes almost shut. I could hear her prayer plainly as she called out the names of her children and grandchildren and asked Sun to pity them and keep them safe on this day. [782]

Soon the smoke from many morning fires rose above the tipis and tents, sharply contrasted 372 512

against the cool air. The fires made with cottonwood burned quietly and calmly; but loud crackling and popping could be heard from those fires made with pine, which was gathered from lumberyard scrap piles. Pine is not a popular firewood in tipis, especially if it is not thoroughly dry. It usually produces more smoke than the smoke-holes can let out, and this makes for very tearful scenes! The smoke also carries little cinders throughout the tipi, burning holes in blankets and clothes. Pine is just no good in a tipi, although tent-dwellers have no trouble with it in their iron cooking stoves. Cottonwood is the favorite firewood, usually found in river bottoms. It is also the proper wood on which to burn incense. Unlike pine, cottonwood coals will continue to glow for a long time after being taken from a fire. This is helpful during ceremonies. Cottonwood coals are often placed on altars before prayers are begun. Later, incense is placed on a coal when the one who is praying wishes to make the sacred smoke. 372 512

As I returned to our tipi I heard the deep voice of an old man beginning a song inside his lodge. Perhaps this man's Medicine, which came to him during some dream or vision, called for daily singing, although most Medicine Bundles don't require this. He was probably singing a song his Spirit helpers taught him many years ago. No one in the camp would ask him about it or dare to sing it. 512 533 [787] [778]

Our breakfast consisted of rose hips tea, fried bread, and oatmeal. The tea was made from the red buds of roses, which we had gathered after the first frost the previous fall. The fried bread was made from white-flour dough, shaped into large patties and quick-fried in a skillet of hot grease. The oatmeal was made from the same kind of rolled oats that our Old People of the long-ago obtained from traders. Ours was a typical camp breakfast, but many of the Old People still prefer the traditional breakfast food—a piece of boiled or fried meat, washed down with water. 512 264 [272] [222] [252]

[p. 11-A]

793
holy place of the Medicine Lodge ceremony is a 796
woman, a virtuous woman who has lived a [156]
straight life and knows the Good Spirits. The
holy woman's spiritual responsibilities are many
and her physical sufferings are strong. That's why
it was unusual to have as many as seven making
the sacred vows in one year.

Only a woman who has lived a pure life will [782]
approach the Holy Powers and offer to exchange
her physical suffering for the spiritual good of her
People. The vow is usually made in a time of
extreme need, such as a severe illness in her fam-
ily or a male relative gone on the warpath. (The 721
last battle between enemy war parties was fought 555
five years before the 1892 Okan. However, many 178
Blood men were still following the traditional
practice of proving their bravery and finding ad-
venture by raiding for horses or material trophies
in places distant from the reserve. This continued
well into the present century.)

After a woman has vowed to make the sacri- 782
fice of putting up the Medicine Lodge, she goes 796
to an old man, usually a respected member of her
family, and walks with him outdoors. He calls out
for Sun and all the Holy Powers to hear that this
woman is seeking protection for her family and
herself, so that she might fulfill her vow for the
good of all the People. The vow is usually made
during wintertime, giving her half the year to pre-
pare for the holy ceremony—the erection of the
holy temple in the center of the Sun Dance camp.

Early in the summer of 1892, the People of 796
the Blood tribe began to gather on the large flat
that lies north of Stand Off and to the east below
the Belly Buttes. Nearby was a large grove of cot- [372]●
tonwoods where firewood was gathered. Next to
the camp flowed fresh mountain water in the
Belly River.

As the Blood tribe forms a division of the 619
Blackfoot Confederacy, so do several lesser bands 628
form divisions within the Bloods. In the Old [361]
Days, these lesser bands often camped apart from
each other, depending on their preferences of

that when their canvas was joined a double lodge was formed. At back end of the lodge proper, sitting in a row, were the old and new O-Kon women and the master of ceremonies [Wilson means the holy women and the priest]; also the husbands of the women about to be initiated. In middle of lodge a hole had been dug 2½ by 3 feet square and 4 inches deep; the sod taken from it was piled around three sides and covered with pine boughs [actually, boughs of creeping juniper —a species commonly found in our country; it grows close to the earth and is the sacred incense for Medicine Lodge ceremonies]. Bottom of hole was covered with white clay in which had been drawn, an inch deep, this design [showing the main symbols of the Universe]; the bottom of all the marks was painted black by sprinkling in them black paint, the edges yellow. A cottonwood tree was planted in ground to the left of hole. Tree 7 or 8 feet high. Upon the tree were hanging the head dresses to be disposed of.

796 793 [346] 796 778 [824] [531] [824]

The hole Wilson describes was the incense alter, representing our Mother Earth. The designs indicated Moon, in the shape of a crescent; Sun; Morning Star; and Sun Dogs. The black paint was for Night Sky, the yellow paint for the Powers represented. The small cottonwood tree stood as a symbol of the Old People's main source of firewood, without which they would have perished. In the midst of these spiritual symbols, the sacred headdresses were hung. In addition, the leader of the sacred ceremonies regularly made incense on the altar, for its sweet smell symbolized the presence of the Holy Spirits.

796 778 531 [822] [824] [372]

Wilson continues:

Seven men rattled and sang, and the three old O-Kon women took each a root digger, and leaning upon them, dance upon their knees, rattling against the stick each a bundle of buffalo toes [moose hooves], and at end of the song tied the toes to the stick securely and in next songs

796 793 [533] [535] [237]

[p. 27-A]

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977 NF6 Blackfoot NF6 Blood

779
796
237
291
353
372

Mrs. Ride-at-the-Door and Mrs. White-Man-Left imitate buffalo while shaking bunches of buffalo hooves from the Beaver Bundle. (Alberta Provincial Museum)

[p. 103-B]

Buttes Road. We turned off this road and followed the old wagon trail downhill to the edge of the camp's flat. The trail wound its way over ruts, past gullies, past abandoned badger and fox holes. A lone cottonwood post, forked at the top and surrounded by a few smaller posts, outlined the shape of a Medicine Lodge from a past holy gathering. The missing posts had either been carried off by families in need of firewood during our cold winters (which can go to fifty below!) or else were eaten by a pack of hungry porcupines. 497 346 [372] [132]

Back at camp, we entered our tipi somewhat anxiously. Every time we leave our Bundle we fear it might be stolen. Yes, stolen! Right there in the Sun Dance Encampment. Not stolen by a thief, although that possibility exists, but stolen by one of our own People who might still believe in the Old Ways. You see, there is a custom among our People that helps anyone who wants to obtain the Power of a holy Bundle without having to ask for it or offer the Owner reasons why the Bundle is needed. If such an individual has the property necessary for the transfer, he can find a Bundle in the home of an absent Owner and then sneak in and steal it. 778 425

To steal a sacred Bundle, a person must be a previous Owner, preferably of the Bundle he is about to steal. He must make incense, say a prayer for success, and then call out four coups before he can take the Bundle out of the lodge. If the person is not qualified to do this, he may enlist the help of some older man. Once the Bundle is stolen, the person must still satisfy the Owner with payments. [782] [432]

For a stolen Bundle, the paymens are expected to be about twice what they would normally have been. I will give you an example of this custom later on.

My Teachers had warned me that our Bundle could be stolen. They pointed out that one respected Medicine Pipe Owner with the same fears as ours took his Bundle back home, while the other Owners never even brought theirs to camp. During the Piegan Sun Dance earlier

age they are dried after being crushed with stones. The crushed cherries are formed into small cakes, like cookies, which are placed on small sticks or turned over regularly to keep them from spoiling on one side while drying. 251

Preparing chokecherries properly is quite an art. If they are not crushed sufficiently, the unground stones, or pits, will make them difficult to eat. Grease must be mixed with the ground cherries to keep them from drying too hard. They are stored in a bag made from a small animal skin whose open legs have been stuffed with wild mint; this keeps the cherries from falling out and allows a little air to enter, preventing the contents from becoming moldy. [415] [237] [824]

Pemmican can be made by breaking up dried cherry cakes and soaking them in a bowl of water. When the cherries become soft, the water is strained out. This water, known as chokecherry brew, is a popular drink, especially in wintertime. The soaked cherries are then mixed with fat (backfat is popular because it does not cake up easily) and pounded some more. The mixture is then kneaded into small balls and served, or placed into rawhide containers to be taken along on hunting or war trips, as was the case in the Old Days. [272]

Chokecherry stems are used in a variety of ways. Thin ones can be stuck into a roasting piece of meat to add flavor. Bark scrapings are steeped to make a tea. Stems are also used for tipi pins or "buttons." Most bows and arrows were made of chokecherry wood. Medicine Pipestems, tripods for sacred Bundles, and root-digging sticks are all made from the branches. The wood is so hard and tough that it will not soak up water, and so is an excellent fire-starting wood after a hard rain. 824 [252] [272] [411] [276] [417] [412] [372]

ROSEBERRY (*Rosa acicularis*): The red pods on wild rose bushes, also known as rose hips, 137 262

[p. 183-A]

drunk to ease delivery at birth or to bring on an abortion. The crushed leaves used to be bound to itchy parts of the body. 944 847 757

PRAIRIE SMOKE (*Geum triflorum*): Called "lying on its belly" because its roots grow along close to the ground, it is still dug up, scraped, washed, and then crushed and boiled to treat sore throats, as well as sore, swollen, or snow-blinded eyes. The roots can be crushed and mixed with melted grease to treat sore gums, or mixed with melted kidney fat as a drink to treat ulcers. This kidney fat mixture can be applied to body sores such as chapped lips, blisters from riding, and sore nipples from nursing. The leaves are also brewed for a person spitting blood. Finally, ripé seeds gathered from the white flowers can be crushed to make a perfume. 824 757 752 303

PUFFBALLS: Known as "dusty stars," these fungi are thought to be the remnants of fallen stars, which dot the Prairies. The puffy substance, used to catch sparks, was an essential part of fire-making kits. Puffballs were also held against bleeding noses to stop the flow, and applied to cuts on horses. The yellow contents were brewed for a drink to treat hemorrhage. They were also used as a compress for hemorrhoids, and by women while menstruating. 821 824 372 757 232 757

SAGE (*Artemisia gnaphalodes*): "Man-sage" had many uses in addition to those already cited by Atsitsina. The basis of a decoction for treating coughs, its leaves could be chewed to stimulate appetite. It was also a main source of "toilet paper" in the Old Days. Burning leaves created a smudge to drive away flies and mosquitoes; soft leaves placed in nostrils checked bleeding. And it sometimes was added to dried meat for seasoning, although it was not actually eaten. 824 [757] [261] [514] [751] [757] [263]

SAGE (*Artemisia frigida*): "Woman-sage," which grows together with man-sage, was used by women in the same way men used man-sage, except that women used it addi- [137] [841]

[p. 187-B]

in front of us, were several herds of buffalo and antelope. Said one of our party: "If we only had the meat of one of them, how safely we could broil it with this smokeless bark." He pointed to the dead, dry bark of a fallen cottonwood.

Said another: "The animals are all quiet; there seems to be no enemy war party hereabout; let us go out there and make a killing."

"No. We will take no chances; no risks whatever. Quiet though it seems to be out there, somewhere, hidden from us, a large enemy party may also be hungrily looking at the herds," I said.

"We cannot travel without food. As you will not allow us to go out there and make a killing, just you make some of the animals come right in here," said another, Bear Bones [Bear Shin Bone], who was always cross, always complaining, but a brave, successful man of many war trails.

"I will try to bring some of them in," I answered, and had Wolf Plume hand me my medicine-pipe roll. I did not expose the pipe. Simply held the roll up to the Sky and prayed to Sun, Thunder Bird, and Ancient Raven, to make food come to us.

We watched the herds; particularly the one nearest us, a small herd of buffalo, all of them save one old cow, lying down and chewing again the grass with which they had filled themselves. The cow was standing with lowered head, motionless, asleep on her feet. But now she raised her head, stretched out her legs, shook herself, and started slowly walking toward us. Up rose the herd then, two or three at first, then all the others, and in single file came on behind her. And I said to the cross one: "There, Bear Bones, as you asked so have I done with the help of my medicine. And now you do the killing. Not with your gun, but with your silent bow and arrows."

"Yes," he answered.

"A fat one. A cow without calf, or a one-winter or two-winters one," said I.

All of my party were looking at me, thinking that I had great favor with the Above Ones; that

side of Elk River was Crow country. We went up onto a near hill that was well grown over with juniper and other brush, and there awaited the coming of day. It came, and to the south of us, where Elk River comes from the mountains out into the plain, we saw rising the smoke of many lodge fires, of a big Crow camp, of course. 726

Leaving me alone on watch on the hill, my companions went down into the timber bordering the river and built a war lodge of poles and brush, and, when it was completed and a small fire of dry bark burning in it, I went down into it, Wolf Plume taking my place on the hill. I called upon Black Elk to assist me, and together we burned some sweetgrass, purified ourselves in the smoke of it, and, with the prayers and songs belonging to it, went through the complete ceremony of my Thunder Medicine; praying each of us, as the pipe went the round of our circle, for success against the enemy, and safe return to our People. [This is the common procedure with a war pipe. A regular Medicine Pipe would not be smoked at such a time.] That done, we rested there for the remainder of the day, keeping good watch upon the country from the hilltop, but failing to see enemies anywhere about. There were plenty of buffalo between us and Elk River; more herds were on the other side of the river. The Crows, we thought, must be making their killings of meat very near their camp. [342] [372] [793] [783] [782] [276] [778]

Came night, and we went on down to Elk River, built a raft of driftwood, placed upon it our weapons, clothing and various belongings, sacrificed to the underwater people some small presents, praying to them that we might safely cross their element, and so took to the water, holding onto our raft while swimming. We easily made the other shore, some distance downstream, dressed, and went on, following up the valley of the river. Morning had not come when we heard, far ahead of us, the dogs of the camp answering the howling of the wolves about it. We did not want to go on and raid the camp; we wanted first [501] [782]

stone, for good luck. But we were not yet asleep 726
when we heard sounds in the distance that made [777]
us reconsider our camping spot. In a heavy fog
we moved on across the line, into the States. At
a place called Greasewood we rustled up another
beef and butchered it to dry the meat. We [262]
couldn't eat any part of it because it tasted like
dried onions, so we packed up our things and
moved on. The mounted men decided to go
ahead at a faster pace to scout for enemy camps,
while the two of us on foot would keep heading
in the same direction.

We walked along until we accidentally came
upon a sheepherder's camp along a small creek.
No one was around and there was a fresh quarter
of beef hanging from a tree. We cut some good
pieces off the beef and raided the tent for a rain-
coat. Then we moved down the creek to a place
where there was an old war lodge that I had
stayed in during an earlier raid. To dry the meat, [251]
we made a great big smokey fire with green brush [372]●
piled on top. We figured that any other raiding
parties would think it was a white man's fire and
not dare to come near for fear of being shot at.
The rest of our party saw the smoke and showed
up before long with no news of enemy camps.
We stayed at that camp for the rest of the day.

Near dark we went on our way, following the
same creek. We came to a place owned by a white
rancher and decided to look around for horses.
We left our stuff on one side of a nearby hill and
quietly approached the place. There was a house
and a large barn and a bunch of horses in a big
corral. The other guys scouted around while I
went into the barn to see if there was a saddle
lying around. I had some matches with me— [372]
those old kind that sputter and burn with a blue
flame. My second match lit up the barn so clearly
I could see two men sound asleep in a stall. I beat
it out of there in a hurry.

I went outside to the corral and was just get-
ting my rope ready for a horse when a man came
out of the house in his nightgown and shouted at

142
302
301
714
292
411

[789] Bear Shield, around 1900. Also known as Pig Shirt, he was a brother of the chief, One Spot, and was
best known for being a lady fancier and user of Love Medicine. He married a number of times, once
[582] even to a white woman. He is wearing one of the holy war-shirts, said to have been bullet proof.
Around his neck is a large brass bell, perhaps to call attention to himself, and a beaded case for a
[372] pocket mirror. His rings are made of brass wire. From his gun hangs an iron, which was struck with
flint to make sparks for fires. (Pollard Photo)

[Nighttime Ceremony, Ca. 1972]

Then, while we sat waiting for the others to arrive, Atsitsina asked the Old Man, "Omach-Kinna [Old Man], why don't you tell our grandson the secret for reaching old age? Maybe he will tell me, and then I will become as old as you are." 886

The Old Man kept looking at the altar for a time, then he began to speak: 791 787 852

My parents took me to an old holy woman who had a lot of Power. She was the one who foresaw that I would reach old age. Her name was Otter Woman. She told my parents, "This boy will reach old age. I have foreseen it. But he will have to face a test right now to prove that he is the right one. Do you wish to risk his life to have him meet this test?" My parents had a lot of faith in that old woman's Power, so they told her, "Yes, go ahead."

I was only about five months old when all this took place. The old woman began by piercing my ears with porcupine quills. Next, she buried me under the earth; I was not told how deep, but she must have left my face free so that I could keep breathing. Then she built a fire of dry cottonwood sticks over my body. She told my parents that the Earth Powers would protect me from harm if I was the one in her dreams. No harm came to me. Then she bundled me up in blankets and tied me into the branches of a tree. She and my parents stood below and mourned for me as though I were dead. She told them that from then on, the Spirits of death would be satisfied and would not come to bother me with misfortune. When they brought me down from the tree she told my parents, "This boy has proved that he is the one who will have the Powers I saw in my dream. He will belong to Sun from now on. Sun will care for him and he will have the Power to help his People." [237] [372] [824] [776]

Then the old woman prayed: "Sun, I give you this boy so that you will guide him like I 791 852 304 782 787

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

796 793 798 [539] that the woman was true and that though she went away with the Elk it was merely for the sake of receiving the ritual and that this is evident because in the story it tells how she was able to hook down trees by her magical powers and it is not conceivable that she could do this if she had not been a true woman.

796 798 793 [785] The ceremonial transfer of the sun dance bundle really begins with the fasting of the medicine woman on the first day. Neither she nor her husband are supposed to eat or drink while the sun is visible, and then but sparingly. On the evening before, they are put to bed by the father and mother. The mother places the daughter on the south side of the fire and the father the son on the north side. They must remain in the same position until morning. Before the sun rises the father and mother go to the medicine woman's tipi, stand by the door and sing. They sing as they formally enter, the father raising up the son; the mother, the daughter. The man is taken out by the father and the daughter by the mother for the morning toilet. When they return a small amount of food is fed to the son and daughter, after which the father and mother take a little food and drink. This must be before sunrise. During the day the son and especially the daughter must sit quietly in their places with bowed heads and eyes cast down. [292] [302] She wears a buffalo robe, hair side in, painted red, covering her head as well as her body. Her hair is not braided, but hangs down freely except for a horizontal band around the head. The hair may be allowed to conceal the entire face.

796 The daughter must do nothing for herself. If she wishes to speak it must be in almost a whisper in the ear of the mother or other attendant, who in turn will announce the import, if necessary. A fire is kept burning in the middle of the tipi, the ears are closely drawn around the smoke hole, the door closed, and the tipi cover securely staked down at the edges. [237] Though this keeps the temperature high, the medicine woman cannot use a fan, but may use the skin of a muskrat to wipe the perspiration from her face and hands.

796 785 784 During the fasting period no noise must be made in the tipi. All the attendants must avoid unnecessary conversation and speak in a very subdued tone; utensils must not be rattled or struck together. Visitors may enter, but respectfully and quietly. No noises should be made in the vicinity of the medicine tipi and boisterous acts abstained from in all parts of the camp circle. If water is brought in the vessel must be covered. No one should spit in the tipi nor do the other things forbidden at the ceremony of the tongues.

796 [372] [784] Throughout the whole period there is a male attendant. He keeps the fire alive during the night and until camp is moved. He can only start the fire with an ember from some other tipi, striking fire in the tipi being strictly prohibited.

539 177 [797] "That, *Apikuni*, is what I told to Noon Eater, the Black Robe. And then I said to him: 'Noon Eater, you whites are very wise, but of course you don't know everything. You said that no white, no Indian, ever went to Sun. Well, I have now proven to you that one of our ancestors actually did visit him and his family in their island home. So now you can tell your Black Robe and other white friends about it. People are always glad to learn the truth about the various matters that interest them.'

"*Ha!* That Noon Eater! He realized that I had bested him. He looked at me, and strangely, then arose and silently went upon his way. I really felt sorry for him."

782 [276] [372] Again I filled the big pipe with the fragrant mixture, passed it to my friend to light. A match would not do: it was not sacred fire. He knelt before the fireplace, with a pair of willow tongs plucked out a coal, placed it upon the pipe, drew in smoke, wafted it skyward, and solemnly chanted: "Oh, Sun! Oh, you Above People! Have [778] pity on us. Give to my friend *Apikuni* here long and full life. Help me to go to my Blackfoot friends when summer comes; be with them when they plant their sacred gardens, for they will then powerfully pray for me."

"So you intend to go up there," I said.

[575] "If I possibly can go. My friend Running Rabbit, a member of the Planters' Society, has invited me. As you know, I suffer from pains in my breast. Daily I pray Sun to give me strength to make the journey."

249 [171] My friend's prayer requires explanation. It is that, from remote time, the Blackfoot Indians have annually planted and harvested, with most impressive ceremonies, a variety of tobacco that they call "*meahwakosis*" (*nicotiana attenuata*). The Blackfoot historians relate that the Mandan Indians, living on the Missouri at the mouth of Knife River, were the original planters and users of it, that the Crow

---

000 libretto by Randolph Hartley, was played first in concert form on January 16, 1907, in Pittsburgh, and produced in Berlin by the Royal Opera House. The premier performance there was on April 23, 1910, while the second was attended by the Crown Prince and Crown Princess. The opera had an Indian setting, used Indian musical themes, and was "superbly staged, both as to scenery and costumes."

A, [i.e., a Catholic priest--Analyst]

25: Ewers E,G-5 (1941-1951) 1963 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

276

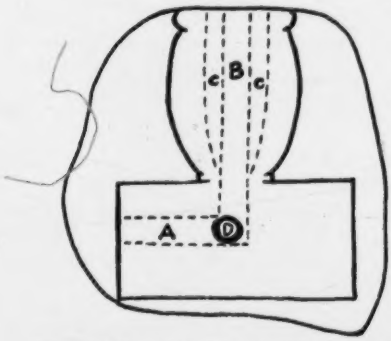

FIGURE 9.—Green-Grass-Bull's pipe-drilling procedures.

tion of the bowl and stem holes to prevent tobacco from filtering through to the stem.

[824] After he drilled the holes, Green-Grass-Bull finished the pipe by more filing and finally by smoothing the surface with dried "jointed water grass" (*Equisetum arvense*, the common horsetail). He used this abrasive plant material by the handful. When one handful was worn out, he employed another, and then another until the entire surface of the stone pipe bowl was completely smooth.[7]

[824] Green-Grass-Bull then proceeded to blacken the surface of his newly
[372] shaped pipe bowl. He dug a hole in the ground about 4 or 5 inches
[23-] deep and 5 inches in diameter, then burned sage in it. He greased the surface of the pipe bowl with tallow, inserted a long stick in the stem hole, and held the bowl over the burning sage. He was careful not to let the stone become too hot or it might crack. After the surface of the stone became blackened, Green-Grass-Bull rubbed it with his hand until it "shined like a Crow's nose."

Green-Grass-Bull said that a new stone pipe should be broken in carefully. "Don't pull too hard on it, or it will crack. But after the stone gets hard you can smoke it as hard as you want."

[171] In plate 25, *a*, Green-Grass-Bull is shown holding a shaped but yet unblackened pipe bowl of the typical Blackfoot Modified Micmac form. He did not make this pipe bowl, but he said that he usually
[532] made bowls of this form. Nevertheless, Green-Grass-Bull was es-
[128]

[7] In August 1947, my interpreter, Reuben Black Boy, and I made a test of this material. Reuben first filed a block of pipestone from the Running Crane quarry. Then we took turns rubbing the file marks with dried *Equisetum*. After an extended period of rubbing with quantities of this plant material the file marks completely disappeared. However, commercial sandpaper would have done the job in a much shorter time.

A,/For plate 25,a, see Category 276, p.60-F
--Analyst/

25: Ewers E,G-5 (1941-1951) 1963 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

276 [824] in the smoke of a sage fire, after he had rubbed the surfaces with grease.

REUBEN BLACK BOY, PIEGAN

My interpreter, Reuben Black Boy, was a skilled craftsman who claimed to have made more than 50 stone pipe bowls. Born in the year of the extermination of the buffalo in the Blackfoot country (1884), Reuben was of a younger generation than the pipemakers [412] whose methods have been described above. Although his completed pipe bowls resembled those made by older craftsmen, he employed hand tools purchased from stores rather than improvised tools of his own making. Whereas the older craftsmen took several weeks to shape and drill a pipe bowl, Reuben, with his less primitive tools, could accomplish the task in little more than a day's time.

[316] Reuben generally made his pipe bowls from stone quarried at the Pipestone Cliff site because he preferred its smooth texture to that of the more gritty pipestone from the Running Crane quarry. He first laid out the outline of the pipe bowl he intended to make on the flat side of a pipestone slab of the proper thickness. With a pencil he drew a rectangle, and within it sketched the outline of the shape of the bowl, and located the center lines of the bowl and stem holes (fig. 10, *a*). Then he placed the slab in a wood vise and cut the indicated rectangle from the irregularly shaped slab with a hacksaw. Next he placed a ½-inch steel drill in a carpenter's brace and drilled the bowl hole. Then, using the same tool, he drilled the stem hole to a point about one-fourth inch from its connection with the bowl hole. He then placed a ¼-inch drill in the brace and completed the connection with the bowl hole (fig. 10, *b*).

With his hacksaw Reuben then roughed out the shape of the bowl as indicated in figure 10, *c*. Next he brought the outside of the bowl almost to its exact shape with a wood rasp. He then took his sharp pocket knife and finished shaping the outside and enlarged the inside to the form desired (fig. 10, *d*). Finally he smoothed the exterior surface with coarse, then fine, commercial sandpaper.

[824] Reuben did not grease his pipe bowl before blackening it. He built
[372] a fire of green buckbrush (*Symphoricarpus occidentalis* Hook), and, placing a stick in the pipe stem hole, held the bowl over the fire for about 15 minutes until the bowl began to sweat. Then, after the stone had cooled, he rubbed the surface with his hand to give it an even, shiny surface.

GEORGE BULL CHILD, PIEGAN

[115] George Bull Child, a contemporary of Reuben Black Boy, also employed carpenter's tools in pipemaking, although he said that it took

25: Ewers E,G-5 (1941-1951) 1963 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

276 Small-Back-Sides' simple hand tools differed from those used by other pipemakers. He employed a hand drill, composed of a narrow V-shaped metal shaft, set in a wooden cross-handle. Holding this tool as illustrated in plate 26, *b*, he drilled the stem hole first, and then the bowl hole.A He enlarged the latter with a flattened, sharp-sided screwdriver. He shaped the outside of the bowl with a rasp, then erased the tool marks with commercial sandpaper.

Small-Back-Sides said that he usually drilled and shaped his pipe [824] bowls during the winter months. When cottonwoods were in bud [237] the following spring he blackened the pipe bowls by rubbing the sur- [372] faces with sticky cottonwood buds, covering them with grease, and holding them over a fire of buckbrush. Finally he polished the blackened pipes with a cloth.

Plate 26, *a*, portrays Small-Back-Sides holding one of the pipes he had made.B

IRON, BLOOD INDIAN

[115] Although the Blood Indian, Iron, was reputed to have been 89 years of age in 1947, he told me that he had been making pipes for only 2 years. He used a black stone which he picked up here and there beside rivers and which did not require blackening.

Iron took the stone home and boiled it for a short time to soften it. He worked at his pipemaking for short, intermittent periods, sometimes laying the work aside for several days before returning to it. Before each work session he boiled the stone. He drilled the bowl and the stem hole before shaping the outside with a file. He removed the file marks with commercial sandpaper.

[194] Iron's stone appeared to be inferior and his method of boiling it to soften it was unique among modern Blackfoot pipemakers. He acknowledged that if he boiled the stone too long it would crack. He also was afraid to exert much pressure in drilling the holes for fear of cracking the stone. His pipes were relatively small in size, as shown in the field photograph reproduced on plate 25, *b*, portraying Iron holding one of the pipes he had made.C In form, it is of the familiar Modified Micmac type.

COMPARATIVE DATA ON SMOKE-BLACKENING OF PIPE BOWLS

276 114 It is remarkable that although eight of the nine Blackfoot pipemakers whose methods were made known to me intentionally blackened their stone pipes in the smoke of a fire after shaping them, only one brief reference to this practice appeared in the voluminous literature on the Blackfoot tribes published prior to 1940. Edward Curtis, in a brief description of North Piegan medicine pipes, stated: "The

A,B,C,/For plate 26, a &b, and plate 25,b, see Category 276, pp. 60-G and 60-F respectively--Analyst/

33: Bradley G-3 (1871-1877) 1923
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

sent his wife and children for protection to the Old Mission and betook himself to Helena. Immediately after the destruction of the agency, the Indians proceeded to Morgan's house but found it deserted. A plain track, however, showed whither his wagon had gone, and, following it, the Indians were enraged to find that it led to the Missouri river and whence they presumed that Morgan had sought shelter at the Old Mission and been admitted.

A blow against the mission was, therefore, resolved upon, and, lying in ambush, they waited the coming of a victim. A man named Fitzpatrick, who had been employed at the Missouri as a herder some twenty days before, was the first who appeared, who, unsuspecting danger, was searching for his cattle. He walked into the trap and was killed. When he failed to return to the house, he was sought for and his body found. The Indians were seen skulking in the vicinity but soon left and proceeded to the Dearborn river, where, half a mile from his ranch, they killed Charles Carson.

(The Blood Indians say that the whites themselves precipitated the attack at the mouth of the Marias that resulted so disastrously. One or two of their number, leaving the main body, went forward to where the whites were felling timber, and, being rudely received, even threatened with leveled guns, fled with their story to their comrades, who, enraged, surrounded the party and cut them to pieces, letting not one escape.)

(See also "War with the Blackfoot Bands," Bradley manuscript, Vol. 8 of Contributions.)

CHARACTERISTICS, HABITS AND CUSTOMS OF THE BLACKFEET INDIANS

Fires

372 The Blackfeet formerly made fire by rubbing together two pine sticks. It was very laborious and they took great pains to prevent the fire from going out, carrying it with them on the march.

42: Kehoe A,G-4,5 (1953, 1956) 1960
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

occasional artifacts in them, and one was discovered in the ring excavated by the writer. Many times the rings are in the vicinity of buffalo drive sites; a Blackfoot informant, Bull Head, stated that his people were accustomed to camp near their drives. [172] [114]

(5) "In the Dakotas, some are merely circular depressions in the sod." Maximilian reports observing the use of sod to hold down the lodge covers of the Blackfoot at Fort McKenzie, where suitable stones are lacking. [175] [342]

(6) "Rarely . . . are the remains of fires found in them." Rock concentrations as well as rock-lined fire hearths are frequently found in the center of tipi rings. Native informants, however, recall that cooking was often done outside the lodge. As for the remains of the fire itself, buffalo dung used as fuel would produce a slow, consuming fire leaving very little ash. Furthermore, the wind would be strong enough, in most cases, to remove all ash and charcoal remains—that charcoal which is found is usually a small amount caught under the hearth rocks. (Local ranchers have mentioned that many times, on the day after one on which they have branded cattle, they can find no traces of the branding fire.) Finally, that cooking was commonly done at the buffalo drives, rather than in camp, is evidenced by the charcoal and ash midden built up at these drive sites. [252] [312] [252] [224]

(7) "They lack packed floors." The tipi ring tested for this feature revealed a hard layer at the base of its rocks, which may possibly have been a floor. However, the nature of the sod on the Reservation (like that of much of the Great Plains) is such that packed earth is unlikely to result from relatively short occupancy of an area. At the 1956 Blackfoot encampment, the interiors of the tipis were marked by grass less packed than that outside the lodges.

(8) "They are situated on high river terrace fingers and less frequently in sheltered lowland areas." On the Blackfeet Reservation, tipi rings are found in all topographic settings favorable for camping. Historical and native sources indicate that the Indians lived in the sheltered lowlands in winter, but in spring were forced up on the terraces by flooding. It should also be remembered that tipi rings are very difficult to discover in the brush of the low valleys, and are in greater risk of destruction, from settlers as well as from floods. [361]

(9) "They may be related to so-called 'medicine wheels.'" This topic is discussed in detail in another paper (Kehoe, 1954; see also Dempsey, 1958). Although no medicine wheels occur on the Blackfeet Reservation, they are found in north-central Montana and in Alberta. They can be defined as cairns or circles of stones, from the center of which radiate a number of rows of other stones. Elderly Blackfoot state that they mark the grave or place of death of esteemed members of the tribe, and this is substantiated by historical accounts. Tipi [172] [764] [114]

A'utaχkaíniki, nitsítaisìstsimai omíksi mamíksi. Ki áksoìòki, nitsítàutaki ókapaíni, ki omíksi mamíksi nitsítsitaiχ'tsàyi. Síkoχkòsà nitsítsitauχkitstsau potán. Ki pomí nimátsitsitaisapiχ'tæki omái síkoχkòsai. Ki aiksistósisi, omíksi mamíksi nitsítsitaisapiχ'tsàyi omí síkoχkòs. Ki aukanáisoyisau, nitsitányiχ'pinan. Ki aiksístsoyinàniki, nitáistæmitàpokùi. Kénnimaie iχ'kakútsiu.

11. Nitáistæmsàtsàki, nitsítaistsiχ'piau. Ki inaksíksi mistsí nitsítsitâχkitoχtoχpi. Itáχpakuiitsiu.

12. Niksísta manistúiχ'kyètaχpi napaíin. O'kapaiin áistæmotsim, ki omím oχkós itsitáisapoχtomaie. Ki istsiksípokui iχ'táiχ'ketàupi. Ki âχké mátsitsitaisapàsuyinakìuaie. Itáumatapitskàχkiotsimaie, ki itáisapisimaie. Ki áitsis, itáisautsimaie, ki itáuatâχp. Kénni.

13. Nitsítsitaioχtoχkìs noχkátsi omí nitsítapoχpinan nokúnàni. Ki nimátskâχsinani, matapínakuyi nisótæmataitapoχpinan Siksikáitasikaipiòpi. Nisótæmatskâχpinan. Nitáutâχkaisinàni, nisótamàkiχ'ts. Ki apinákuyi nítsaksipuàuχsini. Nimátoχkotsipuàuχpa. Nitsítsàtsiχ'p noχkátsi, ki ækaikâχpìu. Nitsítsitaupinomòko. Ki áχkaitukskàu natoiéksistsikùyi itsitsísiu. Itsipækiχ'p. tired, then I go back, I will finally get home. When I get home, I clean the fish. And when we go to eat, I take flour, and I put the fish into it. I put the frying-pan on the fire. And I put some grease in the frying-pan. And when it [the pan] is hot, I put the fish in the frying-pan. And when they are all cooked, we eat them. And when we have done eating, I get pretty full. And now the boiling is ended [that means: the story is at an end]. 539 226 539 252

11. [How I make fire.] I then make shavings, I light them. And I put small pieces of wood on top [of the shavings]. Then it burns. 539 392

12. How my mother bakes bread. She then takes flour, and she puts it in her pan. And [also] salt and baking-powder. And she puts water in [the pan]. She begins to knead it, and she puts it in [the stove]. And when it is done, she takes it out [of the stove], and we eat it. And that is all. 539 252

13. [My sickness.] The first time, that my leg pained, we went over to our ranch. And when we got back, then next morning we went over to Blackfoot station. We went back then. When we got home, I went to bed. And in the morning I tried to get up. I could not get up. I looked at my leg, and it was swollen. They were doctoring me. And about one week it mattered. 539 753

54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana

539 ple knew that Wolf Sleeping had spoken the truth, and for three days Chasing Horses did the ceremonies that her husband had told her to do.

On the fourth day, Chasing Horses had four drummers sit on the cow robe down by the edge of the water, and she had the men place the bull robe by the water's edge. She filled her husband's pipe with tobacco, and she made sure that a man [372] was standing ready with some *apústam* [a kind of punk made from the soft inner bark of the cottonwood tree, used by the Blackfoots in the ceremonial lighting of pipe tobacco]. Then the drummers began to play, and Chasing Horses began to blow on the whistle she had, and soon an otter raised his head above the water and whistled again, and now Chasing Horses took her husband's pipe and walked backward slowly from the edge of the water, swinging the pipe slowly from side to side and singing her medicine song. The words of the song were, *"Nit-tsí-sanni-nah-tu-yay-wah* [My paint is holy, my paint is strong medicine]."

All the people had gathered near the riverbank to see what would happen, and now they saw waves rising in the river. Then a heavy mist, almost like smoke, rose from the water, and through the mist Wolf Sleeping came walking out onto the riverbank, staggering as though he were very weary. Then he seated himself upon the bull robe that had been prepared for him, and Chasing Horses gave him his pipe, and a man lighted the pipe with *apústam*. Wolf Sleeping smoked his pipe, and everybody knew then that he was alive again.

MORNING EAGLE'S MEDICINE

539 On the way back from a raid against the Crows, the son of
955 Flat Tail became very ill. Flat Tail asked Morning Eagle to doctor the boy, but Morning Eagle refused, saying that he was not a medicine man. But Flat Tail insisted. "You have the *Power*," he said to Morning Eagle. "I know that you do."

Finally Morning Eagle agreed to doctor the boy. "Place four stones in the fire," he said, "and when they get red-hot, call me and I will tell you what else to do." So when the stones became red-hot, Flat Tail called Morning Eagle, and Morning Eagle said to place two poles parallel inside the lodge and to have four men sit on each side and sing hand game songs.

When everything was prepared, Morning Eagle seated him-

539 721 Runner's party crept close to the camp in an attempt to identify the people by their language, but they could hear nothing, so at dawn they attacked the camp.

One of the Piegans camped with Big Plume's party was named Onistáiyey [Calf Robe]. Calf Robe and Machkúyeemachsin [West Wolf] and my father were all the same age, and they were all good friends. But during the attack, while Calf Robe was jumping over a log to take cover, West Wolf, his own partner, shot him through the ribs. West Wolf shouted, [553] "My name is Woman's Moccasin" [it was common practice for a Plains Indian to take a new name on the occasion of scoring a coup against the enemy], but when the mistake had been discovered, West Wolf denied having fired the shot that wounded his friend.

When the two groups of Piegans recognized one another they stopped fighting, and they all did what they could for the wounded Calf Robe. They could not take him with them on the war party, so they doctored him and prepared a shelter for him and left him there to get better. Before they left, they [415] prepared a quantity of dry meat for him and gave him four or five buffalo paunches filled with water; they also left him several stalks of wild rhubarb, which he used as drinking straws. Finally they cut plenty of firewood for him and also left him a large amount of *inistan* [buffalo chips]. Buffalo chips burn [372] slowly and leave little ash, and he used these to keep his fire [237] going all night so that the wild animals would not enter his shelter. They also left him a dry stick with a crook in the end, and this he used in pulling the firewood inside the tent. [The word for the dry stick with a crook in it is *ahpahtohkahnikseh*, and Jim and I both had to wrestle with the translation.]

539 After a few days, when Calf Robe felt well enough to sit up, he heard a sound outside his shelter, and pulling aside the dark door he saw a coyote sitting there looking at him. So he talked [825] to the coyote as though it were a person. [The Blackfoots believed that a coyote had the power to understand human speech.] He asked the coyote to please help him, so the coyote entered the shelter and licked Calf Robe's wounds and stayed with him and doctored him every day.

Finally, when Calf Robe had recovered sufficiently so that he could get about for short periods by leaning on a cane, he heard something coming toward his shelter. The coyote heard the sound too, and the coyote ran away in fear, so Calf Robe de-